

Community Resource Centres accommodate from 7 to 18 residents and provide a live-in situation in the community from which selected offenders begin the process of relating to the community by working at gainful employment or attending educational upgrading courses while serving their sentences.

They are located in rural as well as urban areas, several are bilingual, a number have been established for, and are staffed by Native persons, and three are for women offenders. One mobile centre in a remote area of Northern Ontario is for those Native persons who work at timber cutting for the pulp and paper industry.

Residents who earn an income pay a maximum of \$42 per week to their centre for room and board. They are contributing to the community by paying taxes, by supporting their families, and in some cases, by making restitution to the victims of their offences.

The ministry's legal responsibility for the residents continues and selection for the program is made with the safety of the public as a prime concern.

### CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

Although no one is excluded from consideration for the program, an assessment committee at each institution will not normally recommend a person who has committed a crime of violence, brutality, or arson, or one who has committed an assaultive sexual offence. Applicants facing further charges are usually required to have them dealt with before being accepted for the program.

Applications may be made solely on the initiative of the inmates, or staff may recommend to them that they consider applying. Inmates make application in the first instance to the assessment committee at their institution. They must state whether or not they have obtained employment or been

accepted in a community educational program, and if not, where they would like to seek work or further education. They must give some indication as to the value the CRC program will be to them if they are accepted. If there are any negative factors in their applications and they acknowledge awareness of them, they must explain them and give an indication of the progress they have made.

Local law-enforcement agencies are consulted for their views on the applicant's suitability for the CRC program.

### ADVANTAGES OF A COMMUNITY SETTING

The ministry has a legal obligation to protect the public from those persons who commit crimes against them, and it has a parallel responsibility to the offenders to provide them with rehabilitative programs.

- Inmates taking part in a community-based program have the opportunity to establish themselves in the community prior to the completion of their sentences.
- It permits employers, educators, and other members of the community to play a part in the rehabilitative process.
- The centre provides an environment that, for motivated individuals, is more conducive to rehabilitation than an institution setting.

### THE CRC AS A PLACE TO LIVE

Residents of a CRC work or attend an academic or vocational training program in the community and return to the centre each evening. Meals are generally communal, with the residents sharing many of the chores. All centres attempt to make positive use of peer group pressure with respect to behavior in the house as well as the effective use of leisure time.

Group discussions and AA meetings are features of most programs, and these are supplemented by individual counseling according to each resident's needs. Staff at the CRCs gradually build up a list of employers and educational facilities that are willing to cooperate with the centre. Many residents are lacking in such basic life skills as assessing one's own employment potential, seeking employment, handling a job interview, relating to fellow employees, and maintaining good work habits. At least one staff member at each CRC has the ability to give counseling in these and other life skill areas.

After a period of adjustment and progress, residents may apply for a weekend leave, which must be approved by both the CRC staff and the superintendent of the parent institution.

### HOW THE COMMUNITY CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE CRC PROGRAM

As with other programs in Ontario's correctional system, the CRCs require the cooperation of the public if they are to operate successfully.

- Employers with jobs to offer are essential to the success of an individual's return to society.
- Those who volunteer for work in corrections are concerned individuals with a sense of responsibility toward their community. They can introduce residents to the constructive use of leisure time. They can help with job finding, letter writing, and making decisions about the future. Volunteers can show the offender that the community cares.

### BACKGROUND

The ministry of correctional services is one of four ministries which comprise the justice policy field within the Ontario government.

Correctional services is responsible for adults held in jails and the newer detention centres on remand and short sentences, and in correctional centres for those sentenced to terms of less than two years, as well as those placed on probation and those released on parole.

In keeping with current correctional philosophy and the continually increasing public awareness of corrections generally, the ministry moved into the area of community corrections for sentenced inmates in 1969.

Enabling legislation permitted selected men and women to spend periods in the community for a variety of reasons, including employment and vocational and educational programs.

The temporary absence program in Ontario has enjoyed a 98 per cent success rate. CRCs were developed as a direct result of this success in community programming.

There are presently 32 CRCs in operation at the following locations:

Barrie	Kingston	Sudbury
Belleville	Kitchener	Thompson House
Brampton	London (2)	for Disabled
Brantford	Oshawa	Thunder Bay (2)
Brockville	Ottawa (4)	Timmins
Cornwall	Peterborough	Toronto (5)
Dundas	Pickering	Toronto Bail
Hamilton	Red Lake	Hostel
		Windsor

### EXTENSION PROGRAMS

In conjunction with the very flexible CRC program, the ministry has been able to set up a number of purposeful community programs. The restitution program, initially established in the Ottawa area, has now been extended to include the Toronto area, and some men and women living in CRCs will be given direction and guidance in repaying the victims of their crimes.

Many community projects are now emanating from CRCs at no cost to the community. These include working in psychiatric hospitals, bush clearing, town improvement projects, and many other community-oriented projects for which there is no funding available but which can be carried out by residents of CRCs working either full time or in their leisure hours.

### COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL AGENCY SERVICES

In view of the lesser demand in smaller communities for residential facilities for sentenced females, the branch has initiated agreements with established residential agencies for the ad hoc usage of their facilities for selected female inmates. Agreements have been reached with agencies in Toronto, Brampton, Hamilton, Ottawa, Kingston, Beaverton, Newmarket, Wikwemikong, and Peterborough. These agreements will supplement the planned CRC program for females and in some instances provide interim services until such time as full CRCs can be developed.

Because these facilities are being well used, agreements have now been made with specialized existing male residential facilities in areas where such services are required.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you wish to have additional information, you may contact:

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Fifth Printing March, 1983

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